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PART 2

A LOGICAL, LEGAL, SCIENTIFIC, PHILOSOPHICAL,
HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL
ANALYSIS OF THE CHRISTIAN SUPERSTITION.

BY
NORMAN MURRAY.



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He is not his brother's keeper, but he got a pile of his brother's money and is on his way to a quiet corner on Drummond Street, where his poorer brothers are not likely to follow. (See page 30).

MURRAY'S EYE-OPENER.

Part 2.

JESUS AND THE ROMANS.

A Thesis on the Hypothesis that Jesus was in league with the Roman Government; that his mission was to undermine the power of the Jewish priests over the Jewish people; that He was not actually put to death at all, but went through the form of a trial, and that he was finally spirited away to parts unknown when his mission failed.

Of all the theories that have been propounded about Jesus, his supposed mysterious birth, his teachings, motive and mysterious disappearance, the most plausible to me after a life study of 56 years, is that he was a secret agent of the Roman Government. The strongest argument in favor of this theory, is that it explains many difficulties that have never been explained by any other theory that I know of.

Celsus, the most noted of the early philosophical opponents of Christianity in the 3rd century, states that Jesus was the son of a Roman officer, stationed in Judea. Neither the Jewish rabble nor the priests and scribes have ever been able to fathom the motives of Jesus during his short campaign of three years and a half. That he was taken to some foreign country shortly after his birth is recorded in the Gospels. Probably he was taken to Alexandria to be educated. The Jews have been the greatest problem that any country, that they ever had any connection with, has to deal with. Of all the tribes ancient and modern that we have ever heard of, they have always been and are still the most superstitious, bigoted and intolerant. Like the evil influences of the fabled Upas Tree wherever they have been, under whatever name—Mosaic, Jews or Christians they always had the conceit that they were a specially chosen people. They were the only chosen people, their God Jehovah was the only true God, and they were the only people that ever got a genuine

divine revelation—all the others were false of course. They have always been slaves to tradition and during all their career, with the exception of about 200 years, if we may believe their own records, they have been dependant on some other country. The only conscience they ever had, as a people, was a ceremonial conscience. They were always very particular about the ceremonies of their baneful religion, but the Gentiles never had any rights which they were bound to respect, except when they were obliged to. The time given for the birth of Jesus was the brightest era of the Roman Empire. The Jews were the most complex problem they had to deal with. Other people could live peacefully with the conquerors when they were conquered, but the Jews could not. Wherever there were Roman armies, there were, of course, Roman rites and ceremonies. Other people could stand this without any conscientious difficulties, as long as they were allowed to practice their own religion, which the Romans, as wise rulers, of course, never interfered with. To practice any other religion but Judaism in Jerusalem could not of course be tolerated by the Jewish priests and a standing army was always necessary to keep them in order. Like every other religion, of course, there had many additions been made from time to time to the ceremonies of the Jewish religion; various new schemes of raising a revenue were of course devised by the Jewish priests from time to time and though the ceremonial law was supposed to have been completed a long time before, the vast majority of the population had only a very vague idea of what was written in their own books. It was very natural for the Romans to try some method of undermining the authority of the Jewish priests. The books of that time being all written by hand there was no possible guarantee that any two copies of the law would be absolutely alike. Even under a modern system of writing in Roman characters a good scribe could not write out more than about two sets of the Hebrew scriptures in a year and do it right. It would be very easy therefore for a man trained in philosophy, logic and history as Jesus evidently had been, with a good knowledge of the various editions of the Hebrew scriptures to confound the priests and the scribes by the Socratic method of asking questions. Jesus himself did not like to answer the questions of strangers off hand. When he did answer, it was in such a way that the

hecklers generally got the worst of it. The Roman Government felt quite easy about the rural agitation conducted by Jesus; all the harm caused by his agitation was therefore felt by the priests.

Jesus, like Moses, Mahomet and others in all ages who had a card up their sleeve that they did not wish the ignorant crowd to know anything about, often retired to lonesome places very likely for private consultation with the representatives of the Roman Government. On one such occasion we are told he met two mysterious characters, which the only two of the disciples that ever saw the strangers were told were Moses and Elias. At the time of the capture of Jesus in a lonely place Jesus had previously given his disciples a hint of what was to take place, and some of them had provided themselves with weapons of defence, but they did not use them. Very little resistance would probably have sent the servants of the high priest sent to capture Jesus back without accomplishing anything. Probably Jesus and the Roman Government had come to the conclusion that all that could be done at the time to set the common people against the priests had already been done, and that the time had come to test the result. The result was that as far as Jerusalem was concerned, the conservative party—the party of the priests—were still in a vast majority. When the matter was put to the test by appealing to the people whether they would prefer Jesus or Barabbas, the highway robber, released, the crowd by a vast majority preferred the release of Barabbas, a thief and a murderer; and when they were asked "What was their wish about Jesus," they shouted "Crucify Him, Crucify Him."

Pilate played his part of the game well, and so did Judas and Jesus, but it was absolutely useless to try to wean the Jews away from the baneful power of the priests. The mock trial was accordingly gone through with. Jesus was apparently crucified and gave up the ghost but it is quite evident from the details of the story that there was a fluke somewhere. The legs of the other two that were crucified with Jesus were broken, while the legs of Jesus were not. While the prosecution was initiated by the Jewish priests, the Romans only had the final say in the matter. In the matter of life

and death the Roman soldiers saw to it that the instructions of their Governor were carried out. According to the story as recorded in the Gospels, Jesus was executed on Friday evening. The strongest point of controversy between Jesus and the priests had been about the observance of the Sabbath. Nothing can be done in the way of freeing the masses from the power of the priests as long as the people continue to devote a certain day sacred to sloth, as Juvenal, the famous Roman Satirist, accuses the Jews of doing. It is quite evident if the story as told in the Gospel is relied on, that the disciples and relatives of Jesus did not go near the tomb at all during the Sabbath day. The Roman soldiers could stay at home that day, or they could carry out any arrangements that they had previously concocted to get Jesus away at once and for all from the Jewish people. Jesus had not succeeded in weakening the hold of the Sabbath superstitions on the Jewish people. If they had watched all the time, they could possibly have got more definite information about what had become of their Lord and Master, as the few disciples called Him. The Sabbath superstition, however, had then a stronger hold on even the disciples and friends of Jesus, than their anxiety to know what had become of Him. After waiting a day and a half, however, before going to pay their respects to Jesus, he was not to be found—they never saw him any more, and it served the right. They should have gone to see early next morning whether Jesus was really dead or alive. He had probably by this time been on his way to Rome in a closed carriage. The Romans kept their secret well. It is easy for Gentiles to keep secrets from Jews and for Jews to keep secrets from Gentiles; as the Jew would not eat with the Gentiles when he could get any Jew to eat with, and in Jerusalem, of course, that was an easy matter.

It will likely be objected that it would be contrary to the sublime character of Jesus, to work such a stupendous deception. The fact of the matter is, that the experiment could only have been carried on by a man possessed by the strongest possible philanthropic motives. What higher motives can a man have, than to try to save his countrymen from the baneful influences of a deep rooted superstition. If any reliance is to be placed on the Gospel stories, he tried to win the people away from Moses and his crafty priests to an entirely new philoso-

phy, at least so far as the Jews were concerned. The priests were troubled by the Roman yoke, not because the people paid taxes to the Roman Government, but because the Roman Government in their midst prevented them from putting to death, according to their law, any one who violated the Mosiac law. This is the secret of the everlasting hankering of the Jews, as exhibited in the recent Zionis' movement, for a state of their own where they can enforce the Mosiac laws by means of the death penalty for non-conformity. Through the whole story of Jesus in the Gospels, there is nothing to be found that shows any hostility on his part to the Roman Government. When he is asked his opinion about paying tribute to Caesar, he makes the astounding statement that all the coins bearing Caesar's likeness belong to Caesar. This theory would leave much money for the priests. That he felt deeply for the Jews, may be gathered from the fact that he is said to have wept bitterly one day when looking at Jerusalem and told the people that the day would come when not a stone would be left on another. That the Jews should have been dragooned to a superstitious reverence and observance of the Mosiac laws is not so strange as that so many people to-day seem to have so much reverence for a literature and folk lore belonging to another race and which is of no practical value whatsoever, either as history, science or ethics.

Let us leave the Jews serenely alone to their own devices, as long as they do not meddle with us. We cannot solve their problem. Persecution certainly does not tend to human brotherhood. The Jews will never get what they are praying for—supremacy over the rest of the human race. The human race fortunately is too large a quantity to bring under any one system of government or religion. This baneful Semitic folk-lore, whether called Judaism, Christianity or Mohammedanism, will die a natural death some day, but it will not come in our time. There is not much use discussing what use it may have been in the past. The question for us to settle is "What use is it now?" The question for us to always be with us. We cannot alter the past and coming generations will make laws for themselves. Let us get freedom from the rule of the dead. Above all let us get rid of Semitic superstition. Let us do our duty in our own day. Let good and wise men put their heads together and compose a new book of Ethics and "moral stories." The old Testament stories are not edifying to

us. The family life of the old Hebrew or modern Turks is not the ideal life for northern people. There will be no real happiness in northern countries, peopled by Teutonic or Celtic peoples, where polygamy exists. No good woman of our race will share her husband's love with another woman, and no decent man will expect her to. The woman has as much right to demand faithfulness in this respect from man, as the man has from the woman. Free love is only another name for prostitution. Divorce is unjust to the children to whom the justice due by their parents is more important than granting quarrelsome men and women legal sanction to make new choices. Let them look well in advance—there is no law to prevent those who wish to separate peaceably from doing so if they wish. But divorce legally and re-marriage legally while either of the parents still live, is only creating trouble for society. Good men and good women are expected to put up with some inconvenience for each others sake.

Of course it is impossible at this distance of time to speak definitely about Jesus and his motives, but the teachings attributed to him now have not the remotest connection in the world with modern Christianity.

When I was a boy the theory taught in church and school was that Jesus renounced heavenly glory and became a poor man to be able to sympathize and show an example to mankind. The natural inference from this theory would be, that his professed followers would do likewise. Then the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury would have to renounce their grandeur to be like their Lord and Master. The only one in modern times who made any attempt to follow that example was Tolstoy—but no others have so far followed his example.

Then as to turning their cheek and loving their enemies; the testimony of history has been that the professed followers of Jesus have been the most relentless tyrants in the world's history. In any case whether my theory is correct or not, one thing quite certain is that Jesus failed to get the Jews to follow him in any large number, those of them who did follow him had comparatively little influence over the Jewish people. He did not fill the bill, as the Messiah they were looking for. They were looking for a Napoleon to conquer the Romans and make them a great nation. This has always been their ambition in which they have never suc-

ceeded, and for my part I don't see any likelihood of their ever succeeding. It would not be a good thing for the world to give them any more power or influence than they have now. The sum total of their influence on humanity has been like a frost on the early crops.

Now if there is one fact clearer than another in history it is that no nation can be truly great which tries to force uniformity of religion on all the people. Only a small portion of mankind ever did or is ever likely think alike. No nation becomes great that commences to lay down the rule of religious conformities. This delusion as pointed out so ably by the famous Volney, has been the cause of the downfall of most of the great empires of antiquity. The empires that were most successful were such only under a system of polytheism where every one was allowed to worship any God he choose, or no God at all. Of all the people of this world of which we have any record, the Jews have always been and are still the most stupid and fanatical. No people has ever so tenaciously continued to worship the creation of their own imagination which they call Jehovah. If the Supreme Ruler of the universe had chosen them as they claim, surely it is the simplest of all logical reasoning that he could have fulfilled his promise to make them a great nation. A great nation they never have been, and a great nation, it is safe to prophesy, they never shall be. They are now about one-half per cent. of the human race, scattered all over the face of the globe, still they will not assimilate with other races. The greatest wonder in connection with this delusion, however, is that the great nations of Europe and America still accept the collection of discordant pamphlets called the Bible as the greatest book in the world. The fight for the total regulation of this book with other myths of the ancient world is only commencing. It is the duty of all noble minded men who love their kind to work for the abolition of this extraordinary delusion from the world of thought. The history of this book is the history of the greatest delusion that ever afflicted the human race.

ONLY, BUT THERE ARE OTHERS.

The root evil of Judaism and Christianity may be expressed in one word of four letters—Only. The distinguishing feature of Judaism and Christianity has always

been and still continues to be the baneful delusion that they only worship the only true God, and that their Bible was the only revealed word of God, the only revelation from God to mankind, the only rule of faith and conduct, the only star in the firmament. The best thing in the Koran is the repudiation of this word only. Mahomet did not claim to be the only prophet of God, nor his revelations to be the only revelation from God he acknowledged that there were others.

Just fancy the look of contempt and disdain that Socrates, Aristotle, Cicero, Marcus Aurelius and the great and good Julian whom the Christians called an apostate, at a bigoted, ignorant Hebrew, or an equally bigoted and ignorant Christian presuming to tell men so much superior to themselves in wisdom and virtue that they were the only ones that had the true religion. The same profound presumption is propagated by modern Christian missionaries in the faces of the sages of China, Japan, India and Egypt. The ignorant Salvation Army spouter puts on the same lofty air among modern scientists and philosophers.

There can never be peace in the world till these ignorant fanatics are taught their proper place. Of course this cannot be done by persecuting them. Coercion will never cure lunatics or fanatics. Let them have their play, but they must not rule over others, but we must have the right to laugh at them, which is the right that I for one intend to exercise on all proper occasions.

THE RELIGION FOR OUR DAY.

A great deal has been written about the religions of the past, and some who might be more profitably employed discuss learnedly "The Religion of the Future." It is much more important, however, to outline a good working religion for the present than to waste too much time about the past or in prophesying about the future. The present is enough for us. Our forefathers have left all the so-called civilized nations of the world heavily in debt. The interest that all the countries of Europe and America have to pay on the national debts are enormous. The cast iron confessions of faith they have made for themselves, and their children should be cast into the

scrap iron heaps. On account of their intense ignorance, they were easily hypnotized by scheming parasites who would much rather pray (which generally means preying) than work. Though they knew much less than we about how to produce the most goods with the least labor, they seemed to have much more leisure than we have, because their wants were fewer and they lived a much simpler life. We can learn much from their experiences, provided we study them carefully and make ourselves the judges. One great mistake that our ancestors in particular made, was to accept the history of the Jews at their own valuation. The Pagan historians of Rome were much wiser in this respect than our immediate ancestors. The contemporaries of the Jews or Israelites of three thousand years ago knew as much about them as we know of the Jews of the present day. We have been for a long time adding the wrong force. We have swallowed quite innocently the abuse of the Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, Babylonians, etc., etc., contained in Hebrew folk-lore. A careful critical analysis of that folk lore itself will easily demonstrate that the heathens were always by far the more superior people—Goldwin Smith, Huxley and Arnold all to the contrary notwithstanding. My particular objection to the Bible is, not so much on account of the miracles or the dogmatic theology contained in it, but that a brutal, selfish, fanatical, superstitious people have always been put up on a pedestal for us to look up to in admiration, which I, for one, do not propose to do, neither do I propose to apologize to any one for proclaiming whenever I get occasion that my own ancestors were in every respect far superior to the ancient Hebrews or modern Jews in all respects whatsoever. Therefore the first thing to do, to cut out of our life, the pernicious influences of Hebrew folk lore, is to try to relegate it entirely to oblivion—root and branch. This is not a very easy task, but what was done once can be done again. Till recent years when the education of the masses became popular, they practically knew nothing about this literature of which a large portion is absolutely abominable. I ask them and wait for an answer—how anything that would now be considered vile, vulgar, obscene, untruthful, etc., etc., in any other literature can be classified as lofty, inspiring, edifying and the word of God when found in a book of ancient Hebrew literature.

THE GOOD CHRISTIANS.

Another popular argument is, that as so many good people believe in Christianity, therefore it must be true. If all the people called Christians were good, and all other people were bad, this argument would have some value, but such has never been the case. We know that many good people are easily imposed on, which is just the more reason why they should be told that such is the case. This is a fight against delusions and not against the deluded.

THE BETTER WAY.

There is an old and true proverb which says: "Take the clean water in before you throw out all the dirty water." One weak point in much that goes under the name of modern free thought, is that very little effort is made to teach a systematic code of ethics. This system is worse than useless. Many gems may be found scattered here and there through the Bible among which there is bad, foolish and useless. My contention is that a good book of moral philosophy should be all good, and not good and bad mixed together. I propose in this series to give a few gems from Confucius, and the great Stoic philosophers. The west can learn a great deal more from Confucius than the disciples of Confucius can learn out of the Christian Bible.

WISE SAYINGS.

Thus, if we assent to Comte's famous law of the Three States, Confucianism really represents a more advanced stage of civilization than Biblical Christianity.

Knowing that personal example is the most effective way in which a father can teach his sons what is right, he unhesitatingly attributed the same powerful influence to the personal conduct of the sovereign, and went so far as to declare that if the ruler was personally upright, his subjects would do their duty unbidden, if he was not upright, they would not obey, whatever his bidding.

Though often disheartened by the long and bitter struggle against adverse circumstances, and the powers of evil, he (Confucius) never gave over in disgust. Therein lay his greatness.

True virtue rarely goes with artful speech and insinuating looks. At home a young man should show the qualities of a son; abroad, those of a younger brother. He should be circumspect but truthful. He should have charity in his heart for all men, but associate only with the virtuous. After thus regulating his conduct, his surplus energy should be devoted to literary culture.

Tze Kung inquired about the higher type of man, The Master replied: The higher type of man is one who acts before he speaks and professes only what he practices.

The Master said: The higher type of man is catholic in his sympathy and free from party bias; the lower type of man is biased and unsympathetic.

It is the spirit of charity which makes a locality good to dwell in. He who selects a neighborhood without regard to this quality cannot be considered wise.

Only he who hath the spirit of goodness within him is really able to love or to hate.

The nobler sort of man and his progress through the world has neither narrow predilections nor obstinate antipathies. What he follows is the line of duty.

The nobler sort of man is proficient in the knowledge of his duty; the inferior man is proficient only in money making.

The wise man will be slow to speak but quick to act.

The Master said: When the solid outweighs the ornamental we have boorishness; when the ornamental outweighs the solid we have superficial smartness. Only from a proper blending of the two will the higher type of man emerge.

Better than one who knows what is right is one who is fond of what is right; and better than one who is fond of what is right is one who delights in what is right.

Fan Chi asked in what wisdom consisted. The Master said: Make righteousness in human affairs your aim, treat all supernatural beings with respect, but keep

proof from them—then you may be called wise. Asked about moral virtue, he replied: The virtuous man thinks of the difficult thing first, and makes material advantage only as secondary consideration. This may be said to constitute moral virtue.

THE MONTREAL Y. M. C. A.

The Y. M. C. A., like all other Christian institutions, resent criticism. I have belonged to this Institution at one time. I found it beneficial to me as long as I believed in some form of Christianity. The Y. M. C. A. may still be useful to young men who believe in Christianity, if conducted properly. I certainly would prefer to see young or old men spending their leisure time round a Y. M. C. A. building or even a Church than round a saloon. The saloon is evil and only evil and that continually and it has no redeeming feature whatever. I believe therefore that the removal of the Y. M. C. A. to a backward street like Drummond St. was a big mistake which materially lessens its usefulness. I believe moreover collecting \$300,000 a couple of years ago from a generous public and then selling the building situated on an excellent site to attract the public was somewhat of the nature of a fake. If it is to be a private club for the sons of the wealthier classes of the community, let it be so, but let it not pose as an institution with altruistic motives.

THE HERALD DISASTER.

The worst disaster in the history of Montreal took place on Monday, June 11th, 1910, shortly before noon, when a water tank weighing about 12,000 gallons of water fell through five (5) stories to the basement setting the building on fire which resulted in a loss of thirty-two lives. Now I am not going to attach a blame for this awful calamity to anyone in particular. There are, however, lessons to be learned from it that it might be well for anyone who has anything to do with Montreal buildings to take into serious consideration. Montreal

in general is very unfortunate in one thing; it has very bad foundations for heavy buildings, especially on the levels. Many of the old buildings are built on piles and some of them have since been used for purposes for which they were not originally intended. Under such conditions it would seem like courting disaster to put a 12,000 gallon water tank on the top of a 12 inch brick wall 5 stories high in a building where heavy presses were in motion. It would appear to me, though I do not profess to be an engineer, that four feet would not be an inch too much thickness for a brick wall that was intended to support a 12,000 gallon water tank even if the foundation was on a rock, not to speak of foundations like St. James and Craig streets.

There has been bungling in connection with the recovery of the bodies which shows bad civic management. It took eight days to find the remains of some of the unfortunate victims. The first two days after the catastrophe only a comparatively small gang of firemen and policemen were employed in the work of finding the remains. Common sense would teach ordinary people that such is not the work for which firemen and policemen are engaged. There should have been a large gang of builders' laborers under the guidance of a building contractor to do such work. There should be some provision made against such bungling in future.



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